

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 4, 11, and 17 and amend the remaining claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting from a plurality of communication arrangements comprising:

inputting a first party's ability to communicate with a second party;

evaluating a cost effectiveness of a communication arrangement based on said

first party's ability to communicate, said evaluating comprising:

inputting said first party's ability into a decision tree.

determining a cost of establishing and maintaining said communication

arrangement.

determining a savings associated with said communication arrangement.

and

comparing said cost to said savings to calculate a return on investment

associated with said establishing and said maintaining of said communication

arrangement;

repeating said evaluating for a different communication arrangement if said first party's ability does not match a communication arrangement previously evaluated; and

implementing a communication arrangement when said first party's ability matches a communication arrangement.

2. (Original) The method in claim 1, wherein said communication arrangements

09/943,841

2

comprise purchase order and billing communications between a purchasing corporation and a supplier.

3. (Original) The method in claim 2, wherein said first party comprises said supplier and said second party comprises said purchasing corporation.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently Amended) The method in claim 4 1, wherein said decision tree orders communication arrangements that are evaluated by their cost effectiveness to the second party.

6. (Original) The method in claim 1, further comprising before said implementing, performing a cost-benefit analysis with respect to a communication arrangement matching said first parties ability.

7. (Original) The method in claim 6, wherein said cost-benefit analysis compares the cost of establishing a matching communication arrangement to the cost of a next communication arrangement.

8. (Currently Amended) A method of selecting from a plurality of communication arrangements comprising:

09/943,841

3

~~imputing~~ inputting a first party's ability to communicate with a second party;
evaluating a cost effectiveness of a standard communication arrangement based
on said first party's ability to communicate;
repeating said evaluating for a ~~different~~ non-standard communication arrangement
if said first parties ability does not match a standard communication arrangement
previously evaluated, wherein said non-standard communication arrangement has a cost
above said standard communication arrangement, and wherein said evaluating comprises:
inputting said first party's ability into a decision tree,
determining a cost of establishing and maintaining said non-standard
communication arrangement,
determining a savings associated with said non-standard communication
arrangement, and
comparing said cost to said savings to calculate a return on investment
associated with said establishing and said maintaining of said non-standard
communication arrangement;
performing a cost-benefit analysis with respect to a communication arrangement
matching said first parties ability; and
implementing a said non-standard communication arrangement when said first
party's ability matches a said non-standard communication arrangement and said cost-
benefit shows said non-standard communication arrangement is justified.

9. (Original) The method in claim 8, wherein said communication arrangements

comprises purchase order and billing communications between a purchasing corporation and a supplier.

10. (Original) The method in claim 9, wherein said first party comprises said supplier and said second party comprises said purchasing corporation.

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Currently Amended) The method in claim ~~11~~ 8, wherein said decision tree orders communication arrangements that are evaluated by their cost effectiveness to the second party.

13. (Original) The method in claim 8, wherein said cost-benefit analysis compares the cost of establishing a matching communication arrangement to the cost of a next communication arrangement.

14. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by machine tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method for selecting from a plurality of communication arrangements, said method comprising:

inputting a first party's ability to communicate with a second party;

evaluating a cost effectiveness of a communication arrangement based on said

first party's ability to communicate, said evaluating comprising:

09/943,841

5

inputting said first party's ability into a decision tree,
determining a cost of establishing and maintaining said communication
arrangement.
determining a savings associated with said communication arrangement,
and
comparing said cost to said savings to calculate a return on investment
associated with said establishing and said maintaining of said communication
arrangement;
repeating said evaluating for a different communication arrangement if said first
party's ability does not match a communication arrangement previously evaluated; and
implementing a communication arrangement when said first party's ability
matches a communication arrangement.

15. (Original) The program storage device in claim 14, wherein said communication arrangements comprise purchase order and billing communications between a purchasing corporation and a supplier.

16. (Original) The program storage device in claim 15, wherein said first party comprises said supplier and said second party comprises said purchasing corporation.

17. (Cancelled)

18. (Currently Amended) The program storage device in claim ~~17~~ 14, wherein said decision tree orders communication arrangements that are evaluated by their cost effectiveness to the second party.

19. (Original) The program storage device in claim 14, further comprising before said implementing, performing a cost-benefit analysis with respect to a communication arrangement matching said first parties ability.

20. (Original) The program storage device in claim 19, wherein said cost-benefit analysis compares the cost of establishing a matching communication arrangement to the cost of a next communication arrangement.